



TRANSFORMATION
PARTNERS



Effective Communication Strategies

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- **Technical skills and knowledge account for 15 % of**
- **The reason you get a job,
keep a job,
advance in your career.**
- **85% of your job success is connected to
your communication and people skills.**
- **(Based on research conducted by Harvard University, The Carnegie Foundation, and The Stanford Research Institute.)**

Workshop Objectives



- Identify ways that communication can happen
- Identify barriers to communication and how to overcome them
- Develop non-verbal and paraverbal communication skills
- Use the STAR method to deliver concise messages
- Listen actively and effectively
- Ask good questions
- Adeptly converse and network with others
- Establish common ground with others
- Use the right phrases to convey what you intend

Discussion



- Think of a situation where an opportunity was missed because of a lack of communication.
- What communication skills in particular could have alleviated the problem?

The Big Picture



- When we say the word, “communication,” what do you think of?



What is Communication?



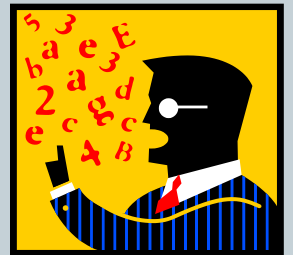
- The effectiveness of your communication can have many different effects on your life, including items such as:
 - Level of stress
 - Relationships with others
 - Level of satisfaction with your life
 - Productivity
 - Ability to meet your goals and achieve your dreams
 - Ability to solve problems



How Do We Communicate?



- We communicate in three major ways:
- Spoken: There are two components to spoken communication.
 - *Verbal*: This is what you are saying.
 - *Paraverbal*: This means how you say it – your tone, speed, pitch, and volume.



How Do We Communicate?



- Non-Verbal: These are the gestures and body language that accompany your words.
- Examples...
- Written: Communication can also take place via fax, e-mail, text or written word.

An Overview of Common Barriers



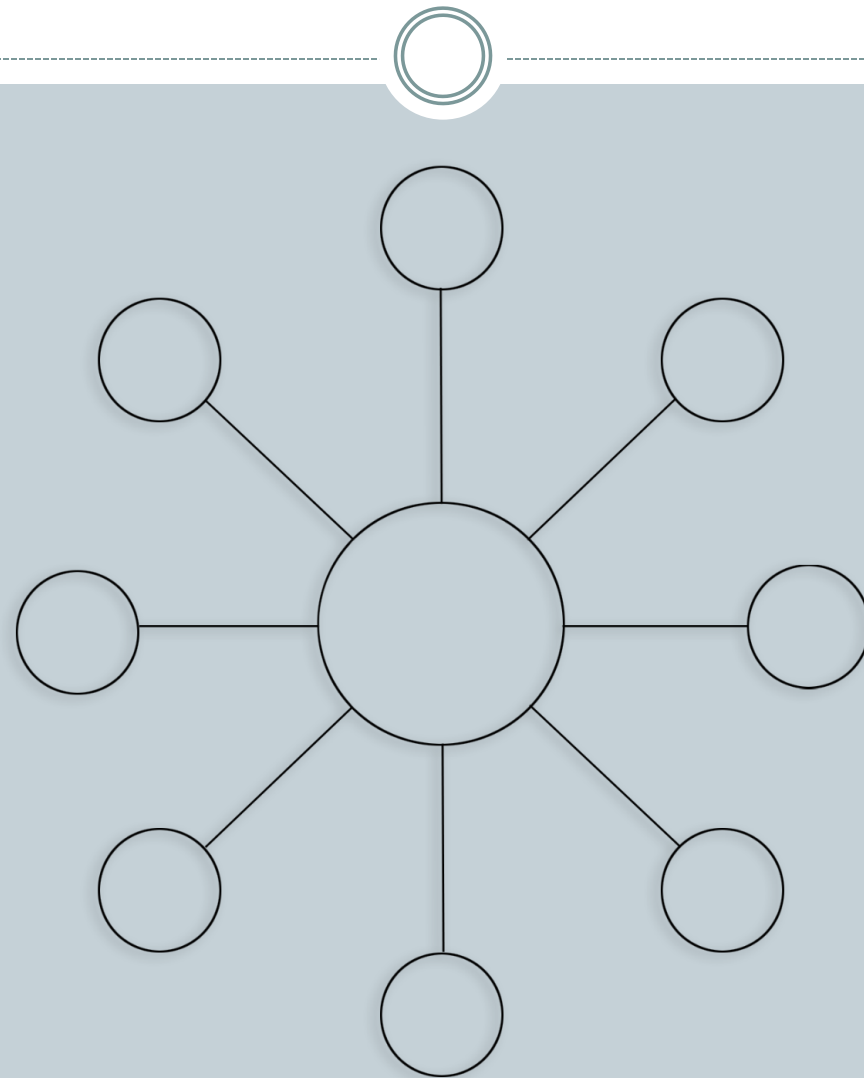
- Common things that people list as barriers include:
- *I can't explain the message to the other person in words that they understand.*
- *I can't show the other person what I mean.*
- *I don't have enough time to communicate effectively.*
- *The person I am trying to communicate with doesn't have the same background as me, and is missing the bigger picture of my message.*

Understanding Perspectives



- Reflect on the influences in our lives that made us who we are today.
- We all view life through the filter of our own experiences.

Activity - Understanding Yourself



Discussion - Understanding Perspectives

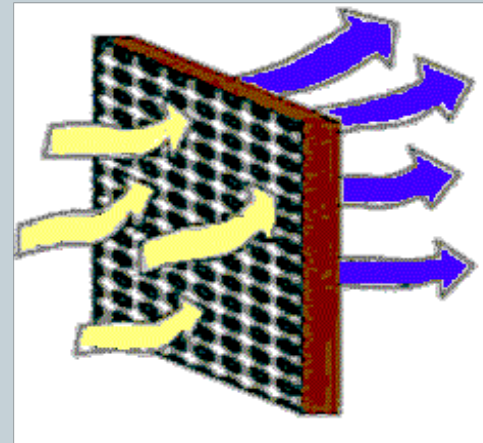


- Oftentimes, when we meet people, we realize pretty quickly that either we like them, or we don't. Why do you think that is so?
- Do your life experiences affect how you view others?
- What important values did you learn?
- How will the awareness of our own biases affect our interaction with others?
- How often do you clean your filter?

Barriers to Communication



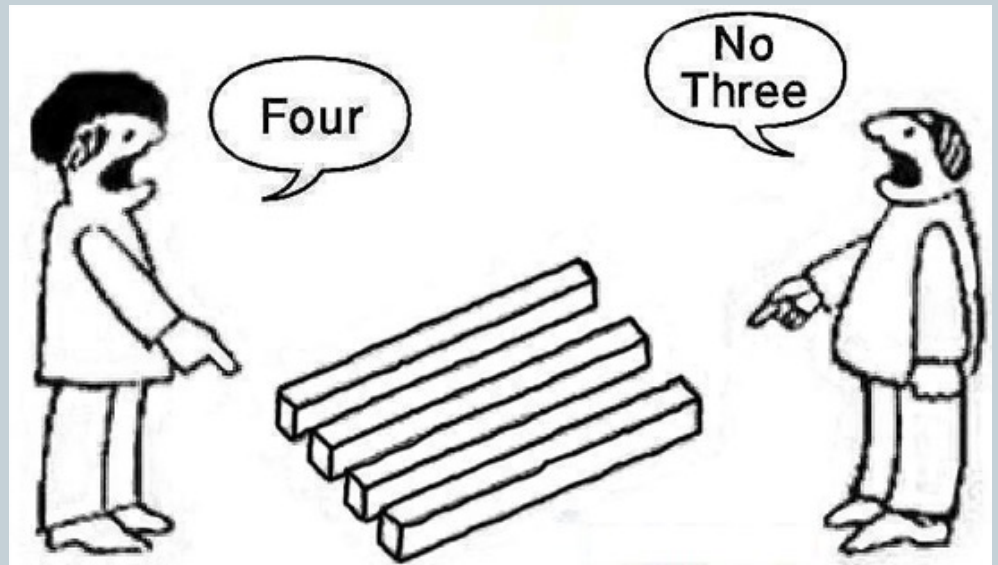
- **Culture, background, and bias**
- **Noise**
- **Ourselves**
- **Perception**
- **Message**
- **Environmental**
- **Stress**



Perspectives



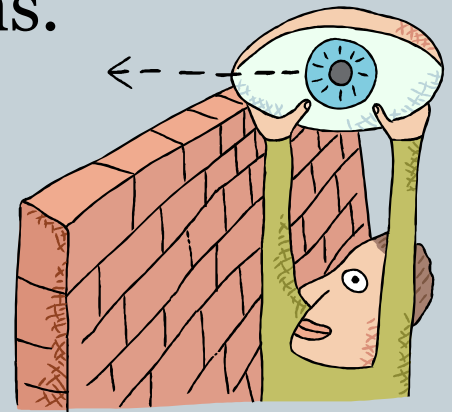
- Understanding a situation through the eyes of another and strengthening self-management and self-awareness skills are tools that can be used in your quest to regulate your own emotions.



Seeing the Other Side



- If you ever want to understand the type of person you are and how you behave, ask other people.
- Talk to your boss, co-workers or friends about how they view you. Gaining this insight is a valuable tool for you to help regulate your emotions.



Communicating Consistently



- Understanding the root causes of your emotions and how to use them can help you to effectively identify who you are and how you interact with others.

The Role of Emotion in Communication



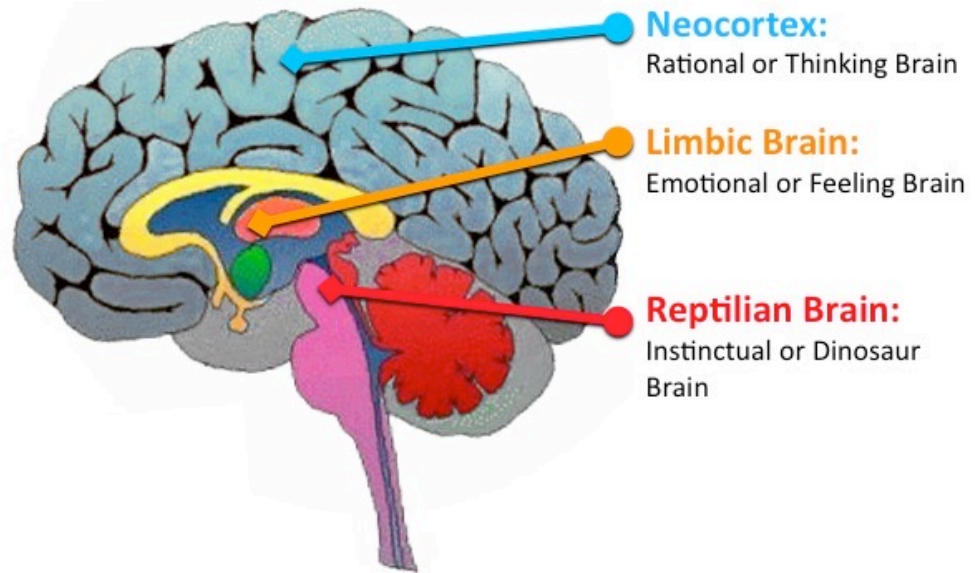
- How quickly can strong emotions derail communication?

Emotional and Rational Brain



- Emotional
- Rational

Time and perspective help move you from the emotional to the rational brain.



Avoid Using Your Reptilian Brain



When overcome with emotion, we have a tendency to revert to our untrained nature

Manage the Emotion



- Slow down
- Focus your thoughts
- Breathe deeply
- Keep your perspective



Manage Emotions



- Managing your emotions is conscious and active
- Establish strategies that utilize your emotions to help accomplish a goal rather than allowing your emotions to use you to create a futile outcome.
- It is important to remember that your emotions are not the 'enemy'. They contain valuable information that if used properly, can help you make sound decisions.



Verbal Communication Skills



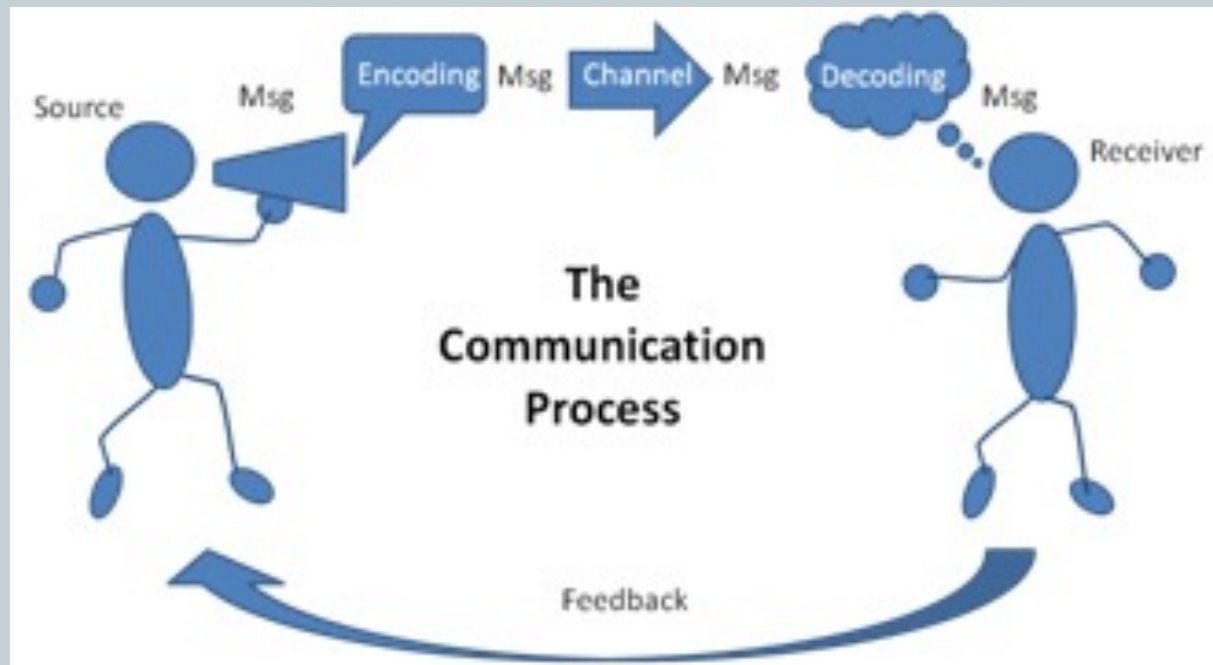
- Strong verbal communication skills are important in all facets of life.
- Without these essentials, one may find it hard to get a personal point across, articulate needs and desires or even compete in the business world.

Communication and Leadership



- **Effective** communication occurs only if the receiver understands the exact information or idea that the sender intended to transmit
- Many of the problems that occur in an organization are the direct result of people failing to communicate effectively

The Communication Process



Crafting Our Message



- It is important to carefully choose the right phrases so our message doesn't get muddled
- It is very easy to fall into a negative language pattern
- Negative phrasing tells the person what they have done wrong
- Positive phrasing stresses how we remedy issues

Phrasing Our Message



Negative phrasing and language often have the following characteristics:

- tells the recipient what cannot be done
- has a subtle tone of blame
- includes words like can't, won't, unable to, that tell the recipient what the sending agency cannot do
- does not stress positive actions that would be appropriate, or positive consequences

Phrasing Our Message



Positive phrasing and language have the following qualities:

- tells the recipient what can be done
- suggests alternatives and choices available to the recipient
- sounds helpful and encouraging rather than bureaucratic
- stresses positive actions and positive consequences that can be anticipated

Phrasing Our Message



5 Principles of Effective Communication



1. Listen effectively.
2. Respond appropriately.
3. Read body language.
4. Ask questions to clarify.
5. Seek common ground.

Effective Communication



- So how do we start to employ these tools?

Paraverbal Communication Skills

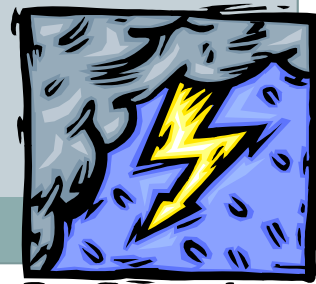


- Try saying these three sentences out loud, placing the emphasis on the underlined word.
- “I didn’t say you were wrong.” (Implying it wasn’t me)
- “I didn’t say you were wrong.” (Implying I communicated it in another way)
- “I didn’t say you were wrong.” (Implying I said something else)

The Power of Pitch



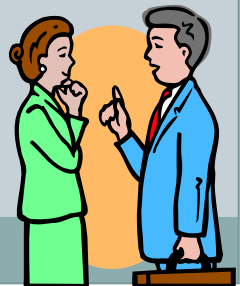
- Pitch can be most simply defined as the key of your voice. A high pitch is often interpreted as anxious or upset. A low pitch sounds more serious and authoritative.
- If you naturally speak in a very high-pitched or low-pitched voice, work on varying your pitch to encompass all ranges of your vocal cords.



The Truth about Tone



- Here are some tips on creating a positive, authoritative tone.
- Try lowering the pitch of your voice a bit.
- Smile! This will warm up anyone's voice.
- Sit up straight and listen.
- Monitor your inner monologue. Negative thinking will seep into the tone of your voice.



The Strength of Speed



- The pace at which you speak also has a tremendous effect on your communication ability.
- Speed also has an effect on the tone and emotional quality of your message.
- One easy way to check your pitch, tone, and speed is to record yourself speaking.



Non-Verbal Communication



- Understand how to use body language to become a more effective communicator.
- Another goal, one which you will achieve with time and practice, is to be able to interpret body language, add it to the message you are receiving, and understand the message being sent appropriately.

Understanding the Mehrabian Study



- In 1971, psychologist Albert Mehrabian published a famous study called Silent Messages. In it, he made several conclusions about the way the spoken word is received.
- The basic conclusion is that 7% of our message is verbal, 38% is paraverbal, and 55% is from body language.



Non-Verbal Communication Skills



- There is more to communication than the words one speaks
- There are also non-verbal cues that all use in everyday conversations.
- Being mindful of the signals you send through body language

Body Language



- The saying, 'Actions speak louder than words' is so true
- If the actions do not match the words spoken, the words spoken will be forgotten.
- If you are not conscious of what your body is doing while you are talking, the wrong message could be conveyed.



Basics of Body Language



- Be present with your whole body
 - Extend an open invitation to conversation.
 - Acknowledge messages from others.
 - Mirror; don't mimic.

Signs:

- Gestures
- Eye Contact
- Posture
- Movement



Basics of Body Language



- **Tightly folded arms and crossed feet:** Skeptical/defensive
- **Chin stroking:** Making a decision
- **Fist on cheek, index finger pointing upward:** Listening with interest
- **Hands clasped at chin, elbows on table:** Defensive/evaluating
- **Rubbing hands together:** Excitement/optimism
- **Hand over mouth:** Skepticism, evaluation, or suppressing deceit
- **Chewing tips of fingers:** Anxiety

All About Body Language



- **THE WAY THAT WE ARE STANDING OR SITTING**
- Sitting hunched over typically indicates stress or discomfort.
- Leaning back when standing or sitting indicates a casual and relaxed demeanor.
- Standing ramrod straight typically indicates stiffness and anxiety.



All About Body Language



- **THE POSITION OF OUR ARMS, LEGS, FEET, AND HANDS**
- Crossed arms and legs often indicate a closed mind.
- Fidgeting is usually a sign of boredom or nervousness.
- **FACIAL EXPRESSIONS**
- Smiles and frowns speak a million words.
- A raised eyebrow can mean inquisitiveness, curiosity, or disbelief.
- Chewing one's lips can indicate thinking, or it can be a sign of boredom, anxiety, or nervousness.



Effective Communication



- We have thought about our vocal delivery and how our bodies convey messages
- Now let's shift to delivering concise messaging

Concise Messaging - Speaking Like a STAR



- You can ensure any message is clear, complete, correct, and concise, with the STAR acronym.



S = Situation



- First, state what the situation is. Try to make this no longer than one sentence. If you are having trouble, ask yourself, “Where?”, “Who?”, and, “When?”. This will provide a base for message so it can be clear and concise.
- Example: “On Tuesday, I was in a director’s meeting at headquarters building.”



T = Task



- Next, briefly state what your task was. Again, this should be no longer than one sentence. Use the question, “What?” to frame your sentence, and add the “Why?” if appropriate.
- Example: “I was asked to present last year’s sales figures to the group.”



A = Action



- Now, state what you did to resolve the problem in one sentence. Use the question, “How?” to frame this part of the statement. The Action part will provide a solid description and state the precise actions that will resolve any issues.
- Example: “I pulled out my laptop, fired up PowerPoint, and presented my slides.”



R = Result



- Last, state what the result was. This will often use a combination of the six roots. Again, a precise short description of the results that come about from your previous steps will finish on a strong definite note.
- Example: “Everyone was wowed by our great figures!”



Summary



- Let's say a colleague asks you what the highlight of your week at work was.
- You respond: “On Tuesday, I was in a director’s meeting at the headquarters building. I was asked to present last year’s sales figures to the group. I pulled out my laptop, fired up PowerPoint, and presented my slides. Everyone was impressed by our great figures!”



Concise Messaging - BLUF



- **Bottom**
- **Line**
- **Up**
- **Front**


Listening Skills



So far, we have discussed all the components of sending a message:

- Non-verbal
- Para-verbal
- Verbal

Now, let's turn the tables and look at how to effectively receive messages.

The background of the text is a photograph of a canyon at sunset. On the left, there are tall, reddish-brown rock formations. The sky is filled with dark, dramatic clouds, and a bright orange and yellow sun is visible on the horizon to the right, casting a glow across the scene.

"Most people do not
listen with the intent
to understand;
they listen with the
intent to reply."

Basics of Listening



Five Levels

1. Ignoring
2. Pretending
3. Selective
4. Attentive
5. Empathic/Active

Seek to Understand

- Listen to understand
- Clarify the message
- Be understood
- Be open to other points of view
- Know your agenda

Basics of Listening



Recognize that listening is not simply waiting for your turn to talk.

Listening Is a Choice

- Decide that you want to listen.
- Listen with a clean slate.
- Clean your filter regularly.



Listening Activity



It takes time
to listen!

Basics of Listening



Traditional/Nonempathic Listening

- Listening – with the intent to reply
- Filtering – through your own agenda
- Evaluating – do you agree or disagree?
- Probing – asking from your frame of reference
- Advising – counseling on the basis of your experience
- Interpreting – trying to figure it out

Basics of Listening



Active/Empathic Listening

- Desire to fully understand
- Build one step at a time
- Create trust and a positive relationship

Assess Your Listening Skills



- DISCUSSION - Listening Skills Assessment
- Identify three key elements for improvement



Principles of Active Listening



- **Repeat.** This shows you are paying attention.
- **Rephrase.** Think about the other person's agenda.
- **Reflect.** Respond to both message and feelings.
- **Rephrase and reflect.** Build trust.

Examples of Active Listening



Why Rephrase?

- To clarify understanding
- To gain more information
- To move toward the answer/action/solution

Examples of Active Listening



Paraphrasing:

- “What I am hearing you say is --- . Is that right?”
- “In other words, you --- [think, feel that]”
- “It sounds as if you’re saying --- .”
- Let me make sure I’ve got this right. You --- .”

Examples of Active Listening



Empathy Guidelines – empathy expresses how you think the other person feels and why. It conveys understanding and builds a connection. It does not mean you agree or feel the same way.

Examples:

- “It sounds as if you feel ____ *[feeling]*, because ____ *[reason]*.”
- “It must be ____ *[feeling]* when ____ *[reason]*.”
- “I can understand that ____ *[reason]* would make you ____ *[feeling]*.”



BREAKOUT 2 -Active Listening Role Play



- Find a partner.
- Select a work-related challenge to discuss.
- One person talks; the other listens and applies active listening techniques.
- Exercise gives five minutes to each speaker.
- Swap roles.
- Regroup to debrief.



Your Voice Reflects Your Listening



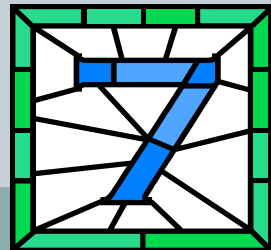
- **Listen to what is and is not said.**
 - Respond first to the feeling, then to the content.
 - Be aware of your emotional involvement.
 - Remember that the same statement can have several interpretations.

- **Your attitude comes across.**
 - Be mindful in your word choice and emphasis.
 - Treat others with dignity and respect.

Seven Ways to Listen Better Today



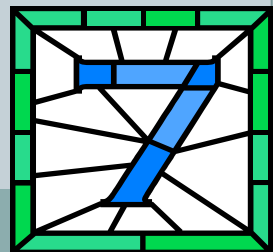
1. When you're listening, listen.
2. Avoid interruptions.
3. Aim to spend at least 90% of your time listening and less than 10% of your time talking.
4. When you do talk, make sure it's related to what the other person is saying.



Seven Ways to Listen Better Today



- Do not offer advice unless the other person asks you for it. If you are not sure what they want, ask!
- Make sure the physical environment is conducive to listening. Try to reduce noise and distractions.
- If it is a conversation where you are required to take notes, try not to let the note-taking disturb the flow of the conversation.



Asking Good Questions



- Good questioning skills are another building block of successful communication.
- In this module, we will look closer at these questioning techniques that you can use throughout the communication process.

Open Questions



- Open questions use one of six words as a root:
- Who?
- What?
- Where?
- When?
- Why?
- How?



Closed Questions



- Closed questions are the opposite of open questions; their very structure limits the answer to yes or no, or a specific piece of information. Some examples include:
- Do you consider yourself to be a goal-oriented person?
- Do you like to work under pressure?
- Do you like sports?



Probing Questions



CLARIFICATION: By probing for clarification, you invite the other person to share more information so that you can fully understand their message.

- “Please tell me more about...”
- “What did you mean by...”



Probing Questions



COMPLETENESS AND CORRECTNESS: These types of questions can help you ensure you have the full, true story.

- “What else happened after that?”
- “Did that end the...”



Probing Questions



DETERMINING RELEVANCE: This category will help you determine how or if a particular point is related to the conversation at hand.

- “How is that like...”
- “How does that relate to...”



Probing Questions



DRILLING DOWN: Use these types of questions to nail down vague statements. Useful helpers include:

- “Describe...”
- “What do you mean by...”
- “Could you give me an example?”



Probing Questions



SUMMARIZING: These questions are framed more like a statement. They pull together all the relevant points.

- “So you spent three hours preparing your presentation then didn’t get the chance to present after all?”



Diplomacy and Tact



- Adding these skills to your toolbox and using them regularly will make you a more efficient, effective, communicator



Establishing Common Ground



- Whenever you are communicating with someone, whether it is a basic conversation, a problem-solving session, or a team meeting, try to find ways in which you are alike.
- What do you have in common?
- This is a **POWERFUL** communication tool



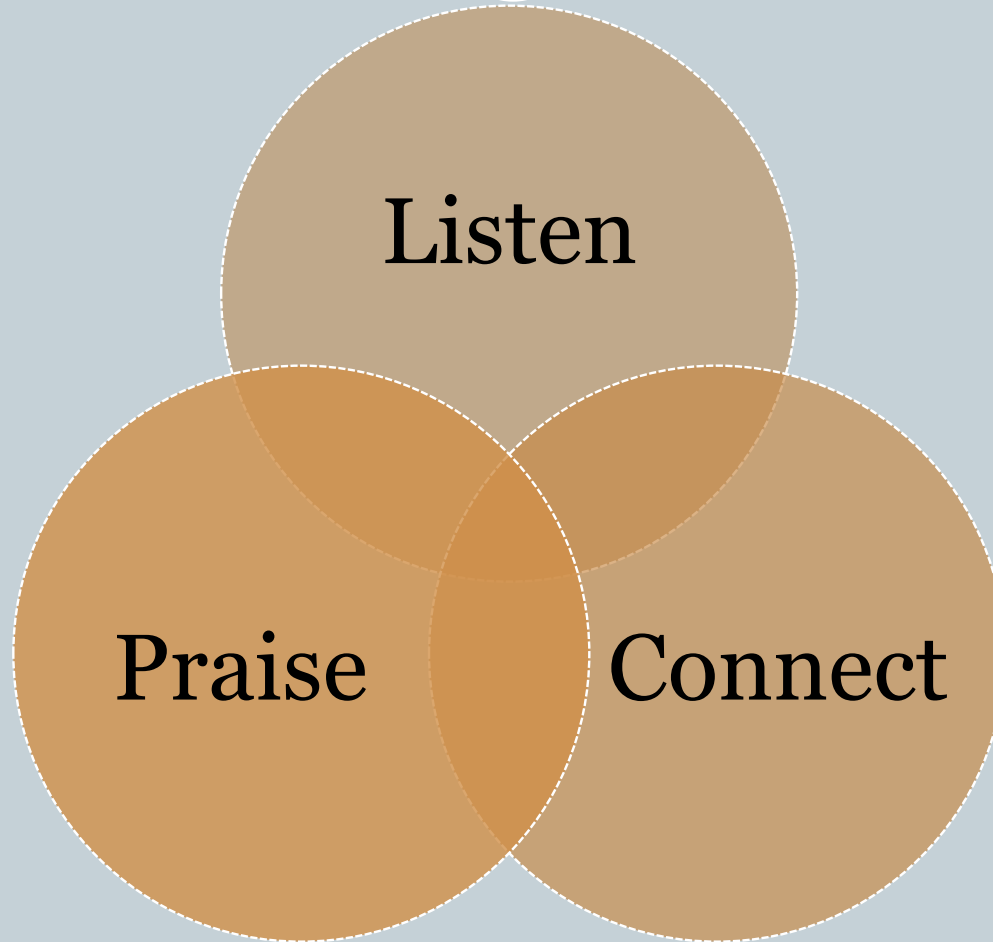
Top Networking Tips



- Join a group of odd-numbered people.
- Try to mingle as much as possible.
- When you hear someone's name, repeat the introduction in your head.



Persuasion



Advanced Communication Skills



- During this workshop, we have learned a lot about communication so far.
- Adding these skills to your toolbox and using them regularly will make you a more efficient, effective, communicator.

Understanding Precipitating Factors



- On a particularly good day, everything may go your way and make you feel like you're on top of the world.
- But on a bad day, unfortunate events can likewise snowball, increasing their negative effect exponentially.



Understanding Precipitating Factors



- Successful communicators are excellent at identifying precipitating factors and adjusting their approach before the communication starts, or during it.
- Understanding the power of precipitating factors can also help you de-personalize negative comments.

Using “I” Messages



- Framing your message appropriately can greatly increase the power of your communication.
- Instead of starting a sentence with “you,” try using the “I message” instead for feedback.
- This format places the responsibility with the speaker, makes a clear statement, and offers constructive feedback.



You Messages and I Messages

“You” Message

- You really wrecked the project when you took over.
- I can't believe you did that.
- You don't even care about the success of this project.

“I” Message

- I feel very frustrated about the direction the project has taken.
- I am...
- IDEAS???

“I” Messages

A graphic for a breakout session. It features a dark teal square with the words "Breakout Session" in white, bold, sans-serif font. The square is partially overlaid by a lighter teal shape on the left and bottom, creating a layered effect. The entire graphic is set against a light gray background.

**Breakout
Session**

It's Not What You Say, It's How You Say It



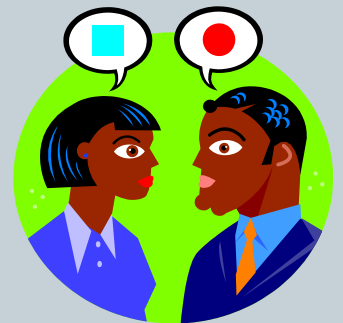
- The manner in which you say something could be the factor that determines what the listener hears.
- It is important to be aware of your emotions, body language, tone, speed, and pitch when you speak.
- Consistency is key.



Disagreeing Constructively



- To disagree constructively means to do so in a positive, productive manner. Its purpose is not to disagree for the sake of disagreeing or getting your point across.
- It is also not used to be negative or destructive of another's thoughts.



Disagreeing Constructively



- What does constructively disagreeing look like in practice? It is acknowledging and confirming someone else's ideas before presenting your own.
 - Examples



Workplace Conflict



Why does it matter to the organization?

Costs

Pure waste, no value added

Risks

Torpedo submarines in our midst

Impact on decision quality

The hidden cancer in organizational success

Calculating the Cost of Conflict



- #1: Wasted time
- #2: Lowered job motivation and productivity
- #3: Lost performance due to conflict-related absenteeism
- #4: Loss of investment in skilled employees
- #5: Conflict-incited theft, sabotage, vandalism, and damage
- #6: Restructuring around the problem
- #7: Health costs
- #8: Degraded decision quality

Shouldn't we address this proactively?

Creating a Mutual Attitude Shift



*A mutual attitude shift from
“me against you”
to
“us against the problem”*

BUSINESS PROBLEM to be solved



Criteria:

- ☑ **Unbiased** - impartial to either of us?
- ☑ **Objective** - does not place blame?
- ☑ **Specific** - so the other knows exactly what is to be solved?
- ☑ **Resolvable** – do we have the authority to solve it?
- ☑ **Concise** – brief?

Defining the BUSINESS PROBLEM



General model:

- *I'm concerned about the business outcome at risk.*
- *I've noticed evidence (observable behavior / facts) of a problem.*
- *I'd like for us to find a solution to the difficulty we are having in working together to ensure the business outcome.*

BREAKOUT



Crafting a business problem statement –
Reframing the problem and depersonalizing
the message

Helpful Conflict Phrase



- *"When X happens, I feel Y, and what I need is Z."*
- You must define the XYZ

Reacting to Difficult Personalities



- **Aggressive:** Listen carefully. Avoid arguing. Be formal. Use the person's name. Be clear with your responses.
- **Undermining:** Focus on the issues and don't acknowledge sarcasm. Don't overreact.

Reacting to Difficult Personalities



- **Unresponsive:** Ask open-ended questions. Be silent and wait for responses. Be patient and positive.
- **Egoist:** Make sure you know the facts. Agree when possible. Ask questions and listen. Disagree only when you *know* you are right.

Assessing a Situation



- Before deciding on the path to take to approach a situation, one must first assess it. Is it worth doing anything about? How will it impact me or others?
- The best way to assess a situation is to step away from it. Take yourself out of the equation in order to fully understand what it is about and the effect it will have.

Diplomacy and Tact



Think about what you say, and how and when you say it

- Understand the context
- Cultivate strategic relationships
- Bring solutions, not problems
- Stay calm in the pressure cooker



What Thoughts Or Questions Do You Have?

